

MARSHALL STAR

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NASA Administrator Statement on Neil Armstrong's Death

The following is a statement from NASA Administrator Charles Bolden regarding the death of former test pilot and NASA astronaut Neil Armstrong. He was 82.

Image right: Neil Armstrong casts his astronaut footprint during a visit to the Marshall Space Flight Center in 2007. Assisting Armstrong is Daniel McFall, a graphic designer for AI Signal Research Inc., supporting the Office of Strategic Analysis & Communications. The print is on display at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center. (NASA/MSFC)

"On behalf of the entire NASA family, I would like to express my deepest condolences to Carol and the rest of the Armstrong family on the passing of Neil Armstrong. As long as there are history books, Neil Armstrong will be included in them, remembered for taking humankind's first small step on a world beyond our own.



"Besides being one of America's greatest explorers, Neil carried himself with a grace and humility that was an example to us all. When President Kennedy challenged the nation to send a human to the moon, Neil Armstrong accepted without reservation.

"As we enter this next era of space exploration, we do so standing on the shoulders of Neil Armstrong. We mourn the passing of a friend, fellow astronaut and true American hero."

Additional information about Armstrong is available on the Web at <http://www.nasa.gov> and <http://www.neilarmstronginfo.com>.

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Family Statement Regarding Death of Neil Armstrong



The following is a statement from the Armstrong family regarding the death of former test pilot and NASA astronaut Neil Armstrong. He was 82.

Image left: Former Marshall Space Flight Center Deputy Director Dr. Eberhard Rees, second from right, shows astronauts, from left, Charles Conrad Jr., David Scott, Neil Armstrong, James McDivitt and James Lovell, a model of a cluster of space experiments attached to an uprated Saturn I second stage at Marshall in 1967. (NASA)

"We are heartbroken to share the news that Neil Armstrong has passed away following complications resulting from cardiovascular

procedures.

"Neil was our loving husband, father, grandfather, brother and friend.

"Neil Armstrong was also a reluctant American hero who always believed he was just doing his job. He served his nation proudly, as a navy fighter pilot, test pilot and astronaut. He also found success back home in his native Ohio in business and academia, and became a community leader in Cincinnati.

"He remained an advocate of aviation and exploration throughout his life and never lost his boyhood wonder of these pursuits.

"As much as Neil cherished his privacy, he always appreciated the expressions of good will from people around the world and from all walks of life.

"While we mourn the loss of a very good man, we also celebrate his remarkable life and hope that it serves as an example to young people around the world to work hard to make their dreams come true, to be willing to explore and push the limits, and to selflessly serve a cause greater than themselves.

"For those who may ask what they can do to honor Neil, we have a simple request. Honor his example of service,

accomplishment and modesty, and the next time you walk outside on a clear night and see the moon smiling down at you, think of Neil Armstrong and give him a wink."

Additional information about Armstrong is available [here](#).

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NASA's 'Mighty Eagle' Robotic Prototype Lander Takes 100-Foot Free Flight

By Megan Davidson

With a whistle and a roar, the "Mighty Eagle," a NASA robotic prototype lander, sailed to an altitude of 100 feet during another successful free flight Aug. 28 at the Marshall Space Flight Center.

Image right: Engineers on the "Mighty Eagle" project evaluate flight data after the successful 100-foot test of the vehicle Aug. 28. In the back, from left, are Adam Lacock, flight manager, and Logan Kennedy, lead systems engineer. From left at the table are Josh Eliser, flight software engineer; Dan Gunter, flight operations engineer; and Jake Parton, test conductor on the flight. (NASA/MSFC)

During the 35-second run, the vehicle was "open loop" -- navigating autonomously without the command of the onboard camera and flying on a preprogrammed flight profile. Once it reached the 100-foot mark, the "Mighty Eagle" identified a new, larger target on the ground about 100 feet away, took pictures, processed the images and safely landed. The test is part of a new series of free flights testing the robotic prototype lander's autonomous rendezvous and capture capabilities. Testing will continue through September.

"We met our goal for this flight, which was to test the new software at triple the height of our last flight," said Dr. Greg Chavers, "Mighty Eagle" test lead at the Marshall Center. "The higher we go, the more realistic the scenario is compared to an actual descent."





"This test article is a vehicle system and requires a lot of team interaction," said Jake Parton, test conductor on the Aug. 28 flight. Parton is one of several young engineers gaining experience and getting guidance from senior engineers on the "Mighty Eagle" project. The test team's ages range from 25 to 71.

Image left: An infrared view of the "Mighty Eagle" taking off from the pad. (NASA/MSFC)

"We are getting good experience in handling flight hardware and reacting to real-time conditions and anomalies," said Parton. "Each time we test, we load propellant, launch the vehicle, fly the vehicle and land the vehicle. It's hands-on flight experience for young engineers."

Nicknamed the "Mighty Eagle" after one of the characters in the popular "Angry Birds" game, the vehicle is a three-legged prototype that resembles an actual flight lander design. It is 4 feet tall and 8 feet in diameter and, when fueled, weighs 700 pounds. It is fueled by 90 percent pure hydrogen peroxide and receives its commands from an onboard computer that activates its onboard thrusters to carry it to a controlled landing using a pre-programmed flight profile.

NASA will use the "Mighty Eagle" to mature the technology needed to develop a new generation of small, smart, versatile robotic landers capable of achieving scientific and exploration goals on the surface of the moon, asteroids or other airless bodies.

Image right: The "Mighty Eagle" soars above the tree line. The vehicle was "open loop" -- navigating autonomously without the command of the onboard camera and flying on a preprogrammed flight profile. (NASA/MSFC/Fred Deaton)



The "Mighty Eagle" was developed by the Marshall Center and Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in Laurel, Md., for NASA's Planetary Sciences Division, Headquarters Science Mission Directorate. Key partners in this project include the Von Braun Center for Science and Innovation, which includes the Science Applications International Corp., Dynetics Corp., and Teledyne Brown Engineering Inc., all of Huntsville.

For more information on NASA's robotic landers, visit http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/lunarquest/robotic/index.html.

Davidson, an AI Signal Research Inc. employee, supports the Office of Strategic Analysis & Communications.

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Marshall Women Honored With Federal Women's 2011 Outstanding Achievement Award

By Jessica Eagan



Tannen VanZwieten (NASA/MSFC)

Four Marshall Space Flight Center women have been presented the Federal Women's Program 2011 Outstanding Achievement Award in commemoration of Women's Equality Day.

This award recognizes civil service employees in four categories -- professional, administrative, supervisory and clerical -- for exceptional service to the Marshall Center and the U.S. space program. Women's Equality Day is commemorated each year on Aug. 26 by proclamation of the president of the United States to honor women gaining the right to vote.

Tannen VanZwieten, an aerospace engineer lead for the Controls Working Group in the Engineering Directorate, received her award for outstanding professional achievement in supporting NASA's mission with enthusiasm in a

diverse and challenging environment.

Carolyn Lundy, senior human resources specialist for the Position Classification Program in the Office of Human Capital, was honored for outstanding administrative achievement consistently displayed with a customer-focused attitude, accomplishments and a conscientiousness that is truly commendable.

Barbara Feaster, deputy manager of the Facilities Management Office in the Office of Center Operations, was recognized for outstanding supervisory achievement in inspiring and mentoring women under her leadership with a positive attitude.

Peggy Hueter, a management support assistant for the Resource Management Office in the Engineering Directorate, was honored for outstanding clerical achievement in performing her responsibilities proactively and professionally in a precise manner.



Carolyn Lundy (NASA/MSFC)



Barbara Feaster (NASA/MSFC)

The women were presented with their awards Aug. 16 during the center's annual NASA Honor Awards Ceremony.

VanZwieten began her NASA career in 2008 as an aerospace engineer in the Guidance Navigation and Mission Analysis Branch. She is now responsible for the autopilot design analysis and integration for the Space Launch System vehicles. VanZwieten also is the civil service flight control design lead for SLS and has been jointly responsible for the development of the launch vehicle's adaptive augmenting control algorithm.

Lundy came to NASA in 1972 as a temporary clerk typist, and entered into the center's Cooperative Education Program in 1973 as a student trainee.

After graduation, she joined NASA fulltime in 1978 as a personnel staffing specialist. Lundy is now responsible for coordinating the center's Work from Anywhere Program; consulting assigned organizations for their full range of human resource management services; and performing fact finding, validation, analysis and comprehensive evaluation of a wide variety of complex, novel and/or controversial human resources actions across the

center.

Feaster joined NASA in 1990 as a project manager in the former Facilities Construction Office. Today, she supports her manager in leadership and direction in the offices of planning, design, construction, and operations and maintenance. Feaster also provides administrative, technical supervision, human resource management functions, and budget development and execution for a complex variety of facilities activities and services essential to the accomplishment of Marshall and NASA mission success.

Hueter began her NASA career in 1988 as a secretary for the assistant director for management in the former Science & Engineering Directorate. She now oversees her manager's schedule and provides clerical support to the Resource Management Office.



Peggy Hueter (NASA/MSFC)

To read more about the women of Marshall and their accomplishments, visit [here](#).

Eagan, an AI Signal Research Inc. employee and the Marshall Star editor, supports the Office of Strategic Analysis & Communications.

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The Face of Mission Success at Marshall Is: Vanessa Suggs

Executive Resources Program Manager in the Marshall Space Flight Center's Human Resources Services Office

Image right: Vanessa Suggs (NASA/MSFC/Ray Downward)

- **Organization:** Office of Human Capital
- **Years at Marshall:** 25 years
- **Education:** Bachelor's degree in secondary education and master's degree in English, University of Alabama in Huntsville
- **Responsibilities:** I provide human resources services for our center's executive cadre including those appointed



to Senior Executive Service, Scientific and Professional, Senior Level and NASA Excepted positions. Due to the unique nature of this job, each NASA center has an Executive Resources Program manager whose role is to provide services necessary for the recruitment, staffing and life cycle human resources needs of agency executives. I provide guidance relative to performance planning and appraisals, as well as a broad range of advisory services to managers based on the knowledge of position management and applicable regulations, policies and practices governing these special appointments. The office also maintains our center's charts and charters. Effectively managing the program for the Office of Human Capital involves close coordination with Headquarters, and I am responsible for ensuring that the center meets all metrics and actions relative to the program.

- **How does your work at Marshall support the agency's goals?** My work is in direct support of enabling program and institutional capabilities to conduct NASA's aeronautics and space activities. As a member of the Office of Human Capital, I serve in an organization committed to hiring, developing and retaining the workforce that will ensure NASA's

future success.

- **Have you found any unique, cost-saving or collaborative processes or innovations in the last year?**

Collaboration across the Office of Human Capital is a given. Success depends on and is enhanced by my colleagues in the Human Resources Services Office and the partnerships built across Human Capital to better serve the center. I am also delighted to say that the Executive Resources Program managers in the agency thrive on collaboration as an essential element to success. A new SES performance system is on the horizon and we have all taken part in its development. We are encouraged that this new system will save time and help us do our jobs smarter; and most importantly, it will be of benefit to our executives. We are eagerly planning for rollout at the end of the year.

- **Safety remains Job One for NASA; how do you strive to live by that code?** Working at NASA has certainly heightened my awareness of and appreciation for safety practices. I do not think I would have the same mindset I do today about how attention to safety is so important here on the job and also at home if I were not a NASA employee. I recently attended the [Incident and Injury-Free Workshop](#) and that again drove home just how safety should be infused in our daily actions. I take safety seriously at all levels and do this because of the great example I see at Marshall every day.

- **What do you hope to accomplish in your role this year?** The rollout of the new performance management system will be a major accomplishment. In addition, there are a lot of regulations and practices that govern how we manage staffing and servicing NASA's executive cadre. I constantly strive to learn more about how to best manage the program within the guidelines, making sure we are knowledgeable and well positioned to meet upcoming staffing needs. Working on improving and defining processes is something I work toward accomplishing each year.

- **What is the biggest challenge you face?** I really don't feel like I face challenges ... but I do face a lot of opportunities! I never know what unique situation will present itself to me on a daily basis. There is never a dull day in Executive Resources! I strive to begin each day in a positive manner, asking myself what I can do to not only address the immediate work at hand, but how to better position the office for the future. I want to represent the Office of Human Capital well by ensuring the Executive Resources Program is supporting the needs of the center director, and is providing accurate and timely services to our executives.

- **On the personal side, how do you like to spend your leisure time?** Spending time with my husband and children is my greatest joy. So much of my leisure time is filled with their activities. I absolutely love to read so I regularly find time to read good literature.

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NASA General Counsel Michael Wholley Visits Marshall Center

NASA General Counsel Michael Wholley visited the Marshall Space Flight Center on Aug. 23. In photo at right, Wholley, at the head of the table, begins his day with the center's Office of the Chief Counsel. He attended their weekly staff meeting, briefing the employees on news from NASA Headquarters and the Office of the General Counsel. The Office of the General Counsel provides functional leadership regarding legal services and issues related to all aspects of NASA. The office is also responsible for developing the ethics and patent program requirements, establishing metrics and developing quality standards. For more information, visit [here](#). (NASA/MSFC/Ray Downward)





Wholley talks to team members in the center's Office of the Chief Counsel. From left are Laura Donegan, administrative support for Deltha-Critique Inc.; Wholley; Rosalind Cylar, an attorney; and Kristine Mackey, paralegal II for Deltha-Critique Inc. Wholley spent the day meeting with Marshall managers, including Jonathan Pettus, acting associate director of Marshall; Dale Thomas, associate director (technical) of the Office of the Director; Kim Whitson, director of the Office of Procurement; Chris Singer, director of the Engineering Directorate; Roy Malone, director of the Michoud Assembly Facility; Audrey Robinson, chief counsel of the Office of the Chief Counsel;

and Jody Singer, deputy manager of the Space Launch System Program. A retired Marine brigadier general, Wholley came to NASA in June 2004. For more information about him, visit [here](#). (NASA/MSFC/Ray Downward)

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Office of Strategic Analysis & Communications Employees Honored for Excellent Work

The Office of Strategic Analysis & Communications at the Marshall Space Flight Center honored hard-working employees during its annual awards ceremony Aug. 23. Bobby Watkins, director of the office, standing at far right, commends team members for a successful year in supporting Marshall with integrating information between and among program, project and institutional organizations at the center. Many employees were honored with group achievement awards including the Technical Capabilities Process Development Team, SLS Production and Operations Cost Assessment Team, NASA Day in Montgomery Team, MSFC Center Director's Breakfast Team, 2012 Great Moonbuggy Race Media Team, CS10 Proposal Management Support Team, Marshall Integrated Strategic Communication Plan Development Team, COMMSS Source Evaluation Team and the MIPSS Source Evaluation Team. (NASA/MSFC/Ray Downward)





Amanda Holcomb, center, is presented with the "Out of this World Award" for her exceptional dedication and superb work as administrative officer by OSAC Director Bobby Watkins, left, and Johnny Stephenson, OSAC deputy director. Peer awards were presented by office managers Dom Amatore and Dennis Boccippio. Civil service employees receiving awards were Ruthie Williamson, Communication Peer Award; Paul Pickett, Teamwork Peer Award; Dinah Williams, Innovation Peer Award; Gena Cox, Excellence Peer Award; and Lindsey Ingram, Above & Beyond Peer Award. Contractor employees receiving awards were Megan Davidson, Communication Peer Award; Jeff Spurgin, Teamwork Peer Award; Debbie Schumann, Excellence Award; and Martin Burkey, Above & Beyond Peer Award. For more information about OSAC's functions, visit [here](#). (NASA/MSFC/Chris James)

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Come Dine on New Furniture in Building 4203 Cafeteria

It's out with the old and in with the new in the Marshall Space Flight Center's Building 4203 cafeteria. The 20-year-old furniture has been replaced with a fresh look. Right, the old tables, chairs and booths are prepped for removal under the guidance of the Property Management Office in the Office of Center Operations. Furniture began arriving Aug. 23 and will be fully installed in two weeks. (NASA/MSFC/Fred Deaton)





Workers are assembling the new furniture for Marshall team members to enjoy during their lunch breaks. Booths are expected to arrive Sept. 14. (NASA/MSFC/Fred Deaton)

Albert Pulley, a facility system safety engineer in the Safety & Mission Assurance Directorate, gets his day started right with a little breakfast in the made-over cafeteria. Visit [here](#) for a menu. (NASA/MSFC/Fred Deaton)

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<http://www.nasa.gov/centers/marshall/about/star/index.html>